

# Mosquito Management

P R O G R A M

## West Nile Virus

*Mosquito  
Protection  
for Your  
Pets and  
Property*

**State of  
CONNECTICUT**

December 2001

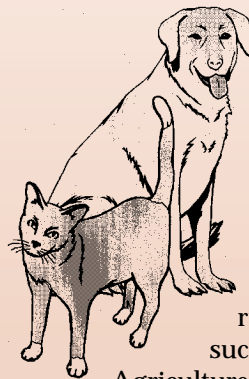
*The State's Mosquito Monitoring and Management Program is a collaborative effort involving the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), the Department of Public Health (DPH), The Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station (CAES), Department of Agriculture (DoAg) and the University of Connecticut Department of Pathobiology and Veterinary Science (UCONN). The program is coordinated by the Department of Environmental Protection.*

## **Can pets and livestock get West Nile virus infection?**

Yes. Pets and livestock can become infected with West Nile virus (WNV) if bitten by mosquitoes that carry the virus.

## **What signs of infection should I look for?**

Encephalitis is an infection of the brain. Sick animals may have a fever, weakness, incoordination, muscle spasms and signs of a neurological disease such as change in temperament or seizures.



## **What should I do if I suspect my pet has West Nile virus?**

If your animal is sick, contact your veterinarian. The veterinarian will evaluate your animal, provide treatment, and forward samples for laboratory testing to rule out other possible diseases, such as rabies. The Department of Agriculture will assist veterinarians in determining if WNV is the cause once the suspicious neurological disease is reported.

## **Can I catch West Nile virus from animals?**

WNV is spread to humans by the bite of an infected mosquito. It is not transmitted directly to people from animals, birds, or other people. However, people who directly handle sick animals should take precautions, such as wearing gloves to protect themselves.

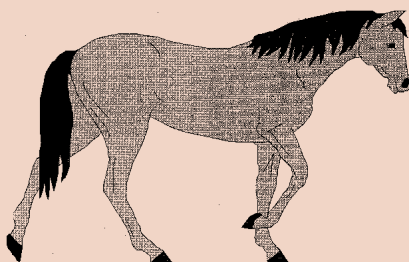
## **Is there a vaccine for pets and livestock for West Nile virus?**

No approved vaccine currently exists to protect animals from WNV infection. Several vaccines are in development for animals, especially horses. See your veterinarian for the latest information.

In addition, a surveillance program has been set up to look for West Nile virus in mosquitoes and monitor for bird deaths and suspicious illness in people and horses to identify areas where West Nile virus is present before it becomes a threat to humans.

### **How is West Nile virus infection in animals treated?**

As in people, there are no specific treatments for WNV infection in animals. Treatment is primarily supportive to lessen the severity of the clinical signs.



### **How can I protect pets and livestock from West Nile virus infection?**

You can reduce the risk of West Nile virus infection in animals by minimizing exposure to infected mosquitoes.

### **What measures are being taken to protect domestic animals?**

Connecticut has developed and implemented a statewide WNV response plan that includes surveillance, control strategies, and dissemination of information. State and federal agencies are working together to identify the presence of WNV. Reducing mosquito-breeding habitats in each community can greatly lower the potential for West Nile virus to become a significant threat to humans and domestic animals.

### **Where do I call if I need more information on West Nile virus in domestic animals?**

Call the Office of the State Veterinarian,  
Department of Agriculture at **(860) 713-2505**.

### **How can I protect my home, pets and myself from West Nile virus?**

**You can begin by reducing the amount of standing water available for mosquito breeding around your home.**

- **Dispose of cans**, plastic containers, ceramic pots or similar water-holding containers.
- **Empty standing water** from used or discarded tires that may have accumulated on your property (e.g. tire swings).
- **Drill holes in the bottom** of recycling containers that are left out of doors.
- **Clean clogged roof gutters** on an annual basis, particularly if the leaves from surrounding trees have a tendency to plug up the drains.
- **Turn over plastic wading pools** when not in use. A wading pool becomes a mosquito producer if it is not used on a regular basis.
- Do not allow water to stagnate in bird baths or wading pools. Change the water weekly.
- **Aerate ornamental pools** or stock with fish.
- **Clean and chlorinate swimming pools** that are not being used. Be aware that mosquitoes may even breed in the water that collects on swimming pool covers.

## **Mosquito Management Program Information:**

### **Department of Environmental Protection**

Website - <http://www.dep.state.ct.us>

**Toll free at 1-866-WNV-LINE or**

**(860) 424-4184** - *Latest information on test results, spray locations, protective measures.*

**(860) 642-7630** - *Technical questions regarding mosquitoes, mosquito control measures.*

### **The Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station**

Website - <http://www.caes.state.ct.us>

**(203) 974-8500** - *Mosquito trapping and testing.*

### **Department of Public Health**

Website - <http://www.dph.state.ct.us>

**(860) 509-7994** - *WNV infections in people and wild birds.*

**(860) 509-7742** - *Effects of pesticides on people.*

### **Department of Agriculture**

Website - <http://www.state.ct.us/doag>

**(860) 713-2505** - *WNV infections in domestic animals, including livestock, poultry, and pets.*

### **University of Connecticut Department of Pathobiology and Veterinary Science**

Website - <http://www.canr.uconn.edu/patho/dts.htm>

**(860) 486-3738** - *Necropsy, tissue sample prep and testing for WNV infections in domestic animals, including livestock, poultry, horses, and pets. Necropsy and tissue prep for wild birds.*

This brochure was written by the Connecticut Department of Public Health, the Department of Agriculture and the Department of Environmental Protection for the Mosquito Management Program.



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